

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in this patent application. Applicants have amended claims 1-8. Claims 9-24 have been cancelled. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested.

In this Amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1-8 and cancelled claims 9-24 from further consideration in this application. Applicant is not conceding that the subject matter encompassed by claims 9-24, prior to this Amendment is not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner. Claims 1-8 have been amended herewith, and claims 9-24 were cancelled in this Amendment solely to facilitate expeditious prosecution of the application.

Applicant respectfully reserves the right to pursue claims 9-24, including the subject matter encompassed by claims 9-24, as presented prior to this Amendment and additional claims in one or more continuing applications.

Present Invention

A method for automatically configuring devices in a network is disclosed. The method comprises associating preconfigured policy settings with physical locations in the network; automatically detecting when a network device is plugged into the network and determining a location of the device in the network; and automatically configuring the device based on the policy settings associated with the corresponding location.

Rejections – Specification

The Examiner has stated,

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: on page 13, line 13 of the specification recites the phrase "... from the router 16 to the *switches* 16 that traverse the network..." The examiner believes that the applicant is referring the switches of block number 18 in fig. 1. Appropriate correction is required.

Applicant has replaced "switches 16" with "switches 18" and therefore submits that the objection has been overcome.

Objections – Claims

The Examiner has stated,

Claims 4 and 12 recite the limitation "the switches. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claims 8, 16 and 24 recites the limitation "the port location. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. For the purpose of examination, the examiner treats it as "a location" as recited on their independent claims.

Applicant has added proper antecedent basis for the term "switches" in claim 4 and has replaced "the port location" with "a location" in claim 8.

Rejections — 35 U. S. C. §103(a)

The Examiner has stated,

Claims 1-3, 8-11, 16-19 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cochran et al. (Publication no.: US 2002/10161867 A1) in view of Burnett et al. (Publication no.: US 2003/10018889 A1)

With respect to **claim 1**, Cochran teaches a method for automatically configuring devices in a network (Cochran, fig. 1), comprising:

(b) automatically detecting when a network device is plugged into the network (Cochran, page 4, paragraph 38, noted that configuration assembly 12 automatically identifies new computing devices) and determining a location of the device in the network (Cochran, page 5 paragraph 41, noted the identification system for physically locating the computing device); and

(c) automatically configuring the device based on the policy settings associated with the corresponding location (Cochran, page 5, paragraph 40, noted that once the desired computing device has been identified, it is automatically configured).

However, Cochran does not explicitly teach a method of associating preconfigured policy settings with physical locations in the network. In the same field of endeavor, Burnett teaches a method of associating a factory default configuration firmware with devices in the network (Burnett, page 2, paragraph 28, noted the factory default configuration.).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the method of associating a factory default configuration firmware with devices in the network as taught by Burnett in Cochran's invention in order to provide the basic utilities to operate the devices and further configure it as needed.

With respect to claim 2, Cochran teaches the method of claim 1 wherein step (a) further includes the step of: displaying a configuration screen that allows the user to create different policy settings that specify what configuration actions are to be taken (Cochran, fig 3, and page 5, paragraph 42, noted the user interface 132).

With respect to claim 3, Cochran teaches the method of claim 2 wherein, step (a) further includes the step of: saving the policy settings in a database (Cochran, pages 4-5, paragraph 39).

With respect to claim 8, Cochran teaches the method of claim 1 wherein step (c) further includes the step of: retrieving from a database the policy setting associated with the location of the new device (Cochran, page 6, paragraph 47, noted that once the device is detected, it is automatically configured. Which implies that the configuration assembly 12 has retrieved the configuration setting from the database 120).

Cochran does not explicitly teach a method of providing switches in the network and a method of associating preconfigured policy settings with physical locations in the network.

In the same field of endeavor, Burnett teaches a method providing switches in the network (Burnett, page 1, paragraph 17) and a method of associating a factory default configuration firmware with devices in the network (Burnett, page 2, paragraph 28, noted the factory default configuration.).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the method of providing more switches in the network and the method associating a factory default configuration firmware with devices in the network as taught by Burnett in Cochran's invention in order to provide more connections for the network segments and the basic utilities to operate the devices and further configure it as needed correspondingly.

Claims 4-7, 12-15, and 20-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cochran et al. (Publication No.: US 200210161867 A1) in view of Burnett et al. (Publication no.: US 200310018889 A1) and Simpson et al. (Publication no.: US 200310014529 A1).

With respect to claim 4, the combined method of Cochran and Burnett teaches all the claimed limitations except that they do not explicitly teach the method of detecting and locating the network device by transmitting SNMP queries.

In the same field of endeavor, Simpson teaches the method of detecting and locating the network device by transmitting SNMP queries (Simpson, page 4, paragraph 0010). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the method of detecting and locating the network device by transmitting SNMP queries as taught by Simpson in the combined method of Cochran and Burnett invention in order to use the benefit of the standard protocol.

With respect to claim 5, Cochran teaches the method of claim 4 wherein step (b) further includes the step of: determining which port on the network the device is plugged into (Cochran, pages 3-4, paragraph 34, noted the TCPIIP port).

With respect to claim 6, Cochran teaches the method of claim 5 wherein step (b) further includes the step of: detecting any combination of newly added devices including routers, switches, computers, and server blades (Cochran, page 4, paragraphs 37-38).

With respect to claim 7, Cochran teaches the method of claim 6 wherein step (b) further includes the step of: detecting processor blades and switches added to existing server blades (Cochran, page 4, paragraphs 37-38, noted the servers).

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's rejections. Applicant will describe with particularity the differences between the recited invention and the cited prior art references below.

For ease of review, claim 1 is reproduced below:

1. A method for automatically configuring devices in a network, comprising:
the method associating preconfigured defined policy settings with physical locations in the network, the preconceived policy settings associated with each physical location in the network being usable to configure network devices at the physical location to function on the network;
automatically detecting when a new network device is plugged into the network;
automatically determining a physical location of the new network device in the network; and
automatically configuring the new network device based on the preconfigured policy settings associated with the physical location of the new network device.

Cochran, in view of Burnett, does not teach or suggest "associating preconfigured policy settings with physical locations in the network"

First, Claim 1 recited “physical locations” **not** devices as in Burnett. Second, Burnett defines “factory default configuration”. In contrast, the “preconfigured policy settings” in claim 1, are “usable to configure network devices... to function on the network”. Hence, the “factory default configuration” cannot be construed as the “preconfigured policy settings” as recited in claim 1.

Applicants submit that the Examiner's reference of Burnett is within the terminology section of Burnett's disclosure (Burnett, column 28). In this section, the term "factory default configuration" or "factory default state" is defined as "an out-of-the-box" or un-initialized configuration or state in which a network device does contain firmware but contains no data to identify itself to the target network environment in which it will be functioning and contains no data identifying other network devices in the target network environment."

Therefore, because Burnett does not remedy the deficiencies of Cochran, Cochran in view of Burnett does not teach or suggest claim 1.

Applicants submit that claims 2-8 are also allowable since they depend either directly or indirectly upon an allowable base claim. In addition, Applicants note that the dependent claims are also allowable on their own merits.

Applicant submits that claims 2-8 are allowable since they depend directly upon an allowable base claim. In addition, Applicants note that the dependent claims are also allowable on their own merits.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-8 are in condition for allowance.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims as now presented. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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